Milford Track Multiday Guided Walk concession application

G - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Applicant is currently operating the multiday guided walk on the Milford Track, Fiordland National Park under a licence (original granted in 1991, a renewal granted in 2005) and subsequent variations to that licence, and other appropriate authorisations.

The Applicant is dedicated to avoiding, remedying or mitigating any potential adverse effects of the activity on the public conservation land and water, and to other users of the land and water. The Applicant is also committed to conservation outcomes where staff and visitors connect and contribute to conservation, and they have enriched experiences when recreating within the Fiordland National Park.

The Milford Track is a premier track within New Zealand. As outlined within the concession application documents, the Milford Track is a high use Great Walk track (23rd October to 30th April each year) and is identified as an iconic destination within the Southland Murihiku Conservation Management Plan (CMS). Its status as a world-renowned Great Walk is fitting for the icon within the outstanding landscape environment. The track traverses quintessential Fiordland National Park, enabling visitors to take in breath taking views, walk among mountain forests and over alpine passes, pass cascading waterfalls, and view local flora and fauna. The inherent natural value is apparent, the experience of this is heightened with the significant historical and cultural values the track provides.

Many visitors (approx. 14,000) are expected to walk the track during the Great walk season annually. The track itself is a well-constructed facility. Visitors to the track have an expectation that it is generally an easy walking, well-formed track, and expect a comfortable backcountry recreational experience within an environment that traverses forest floors to alpine passes.

The Applicant provides a quality multiday guided walk experience to walkers who wish to experience a backcountry track in a comfortable environment with guides and private lodges. As previously outlined, the Applicants visitors walk the length of the track (with optional side trips) with three night's accommodation on the track at the Applicant's lodges. Visitors access the track over Lake Te Anau (this boat trip does not make up part of this application) and depart from the track over Milford Sound/*Piopiotahi* to Freshwater Basin (on the Applicant's vessel 'Te Namu').

The Applicant resupplies the accommodation lodges via helicopter once per week from Deepwater Basin and operates a barge from Te Anau Downs to Glade Wharf for the same purpose, and for any repair and maintenance (which predominately occurs outside of the walking season). At times for development purposes the Applicant may require a helicopter landing/take off from Te Anau Downs for the purpose of carrying in supply materials.

The Applicant has a Gold Sustainable Tourism Business Award with Qualmark. This level of award recognises the best sustainable tourism businesses in New Zealand. Delivery of exceptional customer experiences is an integral part of what the Applicant does. A Gold Award identifies businesses leading the way in making the New Zealand tourism industry a world class sustainable visitor destination. Part of the award incorporates a "Light footprint" principle: an environmentally friendly and holistically sustainable experience; and a "Safe and Sound" principle: where safe principles and practices are part of every experience.

The Applicant is accredited with OutdoorsMark certification. This certification is awarded to operators who have met the highest possible standard of safety. It is a national and international recognition.

The following outlines what the Applicant considers to be the key locations, special features or values of those locations and the potential effects (adverse and positive) of the activity (in its entirety, covering the Lease, Licence and Easement applications) on the land and other users of the land and outlines ways in which these can be avoided, remedied or mitigated:

Location on public conservation land:

Fiordland National Park – Milford Track (Great Walk from 23rd Oct to 30th April each year), visitor setting is High Use Track Corridor:

Special feature or value	Potential effects of your activity on the feature or value (positive or adverse)	Methods to remedy, mitigate or avoid any adverse effects identified
Landscape values – Scenic and outstanding landscapes Native forests Alpine environment with geological landforms Mountainous	Visual effects/impingement of the existing building and structures on the natural environment	Background: The first cut of the track up the Arthur Valley to the Sutherland falls is thought to have occurred in 1888 and late in the same year the first European crossing of the Mackinnon pass is thought to have occurred. Since then tourism, in the form of guided walks, has been taking place and structures erected to accommodate the service. While the track and guided walks have evolved, the beauty and magnitude of the surrounding landscape has been largely untouched. The accommodation buildings, adjacent buildings/structures (boardwalks, storage, generator and drying rooms), wharf, shelters and telecommunication utilities, have all been previously considered and authorised under appropriate agreements. As part of these authorisation processes consideration of the potential visual effects of each structure occurred. The current application does not propose to include additional structures or alterations to existing structures. There is no proposal in this application for construction, vegetation clearance or disturbance to the environment. Maintenance of all the structures shall be appropriate to the specific buildings. Maintenance such as painting (using an approved colour palate), cleaning, electrical and repairs is undertaken when required to ensure any potential effects of the buildings are mitigated and to continue to meet the building warrant of fitness. Any maintenance and development of any existing buildings, structures and utilities will be carried out with the most regard to the environment and its biodiversity, including any visual impact on the surrounds. All staff (including any construction and maintenance) will be briefed on the importance of the location and its values. If necessary, areas to avoid will be clearly taped off. Any future alterations or development will need prior approval from the

		Department.
Landscape Values continued	Structures and building along the track – available for use by the independent walkers and for the Department of Conservation management purposes (positive)	Background: The Licence (1991) for the multiday guided walk on the Milford Track provided the Applicant with the use of the public shelter facilities for the benefit of its staff and visitors. Part of this provision is the Applicant cooperating with the Department to keep the shelter facilities in good repair and condition. The Applicants accommodation huts have exclusive use for the Applicant, however in the event of an emergency the huts will be made available to the public. The Applicant provides buildings and structures for the benefit of its staff and visitors to the Milford Track. This not only mitigates waste pollution into the environment, but also provides necessary shelter from inclement weather reducing the risk of medivac situations. The Applicant also enables independent walkers to make use of the shelters (Hirere, Boatshed, Bus Stop and Quintin), some include toilets. This widens the scope of waste pollution mitigation, reducing risk of accidents and incidents and increases the number of individuals who have a more enhanced experience on the track due to the service comforts provided at certain shelters. The Department of Conservation staff and contractors at times utilise the accommodation at Hirere and Boatshed shelters for when they are undertaking work as part of conservation programmes. The Applicant undertakes the cleaning and restocking of the public ablution facilities and shelters along the length of the track, in accordance with the pervious Licence conditions.
Terrestrial Value	Fire Risk	Fire is a significant threat in the natural environment. The Applicant always takes all practical and reasonable actions to reduce the fire risk. Staff have extensive training in fire risk management, especially the Applicant's operational firefighting procedures and use of equipment i.e. fire blankets and fire extinguishers. The Applicant ensures best practice and supervision of cooking instruments are always priorities. The Applicants visitors are educated on fire risk and the importance of being careful with any potential fire igniting items i.e. cigarettes and matches. Fires are not lit by the Applicants staff or

		visitors unless it is in a properly constructed fireplace. Fire extinguisher devices are located at all accommodation lodges, are carried on vessels and are at other facilities where it is considered necessary. Any repair, maintenance and development work are carried out with precautions in place to mitigate any fire risk at the time. All notices by fire authorities will be adhered to.
	Introduction of new or increase in existing threats to ecosystems i.e. pests and weeds	Biosecurity: It is the Applicant's policy to comply with any and all relevant government organisations biosecurity requirements. As per existing and previous concession authorisations, the Check, Clean and Dry (for Didymo) protocol is applied and all staff are educated on this procedure to ensure this is passed onto visitors to adhere to. The Applicant's management will alert staff to any potential biosecurity issues and how to manage this within the proposed activity. Any observations of invasive weeds or pests, are and will continue to be, recorded and reported to the Department as soon as practically possible. It is in the Applicants best interest to safeguard the land and waters for the sustainability and quality of the proposed activity. The Applicant takes all precautions to ensure weeds and pests are not introduced to the land through its operations and this is done by ensuring all tyres, footwear, gaiters, packs and any other items are checked and cleaned before entering the land. Boats and other vehicles are checked to ensure no pests are brought onto the land. The land around structures is monitored for any weed growth and treated. Additionally, all food waste is removed from the National Park to avoid any contamination by seeds. Pest management practices (traps) are implemented around the lodge buildings and structures, with the appropriate authorisation from the Department. The Applicant is willing to further engage with the Department or other authorised organisations to investigate opportunities for pest management programmes or preservation of taonga species.
	Discharge of pollutants into the environment (wastewater	All the lodge accommodation sites and the boatshed shelter are equipped with onsite septic systems. All wastewater is discharged to these systems. The

	management)	current systems have been through appropriate authorisation processes and the potential adverse effects of these considered. However, the Applicant ensures all aspects of the wastewater systems are 'fit for purpose' and are monitored and maintained in proper order to ensure no adverse impact is made on the environment and other users of the land. Septic tanks are monitored, and waste is removed from the park as and when required. Monitoring of current systems occurs regularly to ensure maintenance is applied at appropriate times and to prevent any system failure. A natural bacterium (bio-enzyme) is added to the septic system to help degrade the sewage within the septic tanks, prolonging the need to remove the sludge, and therefore reducing aircraft use associated with its removal. Waterway tests occur throughout the walking season as part of the monitoring programme. The Applicant meets all the requirements of their discharge consents. The Applicant uses sustainable cleaning and soap products to safeguard and complement the septic systems. Further information is provided in the attached Responsible Tourism Policy (Document R), a policy applied by the Applicant in all aspects of its operation.
Terrestrial Values (cont.)	Discharge of pollutants into the environment (cont.) and hazard management	Hazardous substances - storage of fuel for aspects of the proposed activity is necessary given the location and type of activity under application. Fuel containment and procedures are thorough to ensure safety to the environment and other users of the land. The Applicant ensures that all legislative requirements are met in relation to the storage and use of hazardous substances and health and safety requirements. A fuel containment spillage kit is kept at each generator shed at all times, all fuel tanks have double bunding, the generator sheds have a containment area for fuel to ensure no leaks or spills beyond this restraint, and there is no long term storage of used oil on site, this is flown out at the first opportunity. Refuelling of vehicles (including vessels), helicopter and equipment is undertaken in designated areas with specialist equipment to minimise spilling and contamination of the surrounding environment. The carrying of fuel

		supplies on transportation is only what's necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle/vessel. Where it is not necessary it is not carried. Helicopters – training is provided to all staff who operate in and around helicopters as this is considered a high-risk task. Further information on policies relating to this activity are contained within the attached health and safety plan and guide manual (Documents P and O respectively). All practical steps are taken to ensure staff and visitors are safe during the operation of the activity under application. Hazard identification is undertaken regularly to minimise harm or risk to staff and visitors. Hazard management protocol is outlined in the attached health and safety plan (Document P).
	Waste Management (rubbish and recycling)	Waste management procedures ensure that all waste materials are taken out of the National Park and disposed of appropriately (pack it in and pack it out policy), including all food waste. Please refer to the attached Responsible Tourism Policy for further information (Document R). In summary; all waste is separated into rubbish, recycling and other waste materials. All are collected and transported out where necessary so not to leave any waste within the environment. The entire multiday guided walk activity is operated in such a way so to reduce waste production where possible. Any recycling of materials for onsite use is only done where it is a practical solution and will not harm the environment i.e. old towels for rags. The Applicant bulk purchases to reduce packaging, therefore waste. Cans are crushed and other waste packaging is minimised (broken down) to reduce footprint of waste materials, subsequently reducing the number of rubbish removal flights. Biodegradable pack liners are provided for walkers on track. Waste oil is collected and sent out of the National Park to be recycled.
	Heightened appreciation and knowledge of the land and its history (positive)	Interpretation and information provided by the Applicant via staff, its website, other publications and panels (at huts) provide an opportunity to improve understanding and appreciation of the Fiordland National Park lands and waters. Through telling stories and ensuring appropriate messages are communicated,

		visitors can have a deeper appreciation for the past, present and future conservation values of the area, and what is being done to preserve these. The Applicant encourages its visitors to participate in conservation in their own way also, typically through donations to the Kea Conservation Trust or the Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust.
	Disturbance to flora and fauna, and their habitat.	New Zealand has a range of indigenous plants and animals and is one of the reasons why some visitors come to New Zealand and specifically to the Fiordland National Park. The Applicant complies with relevant concession conditions (Care Codes) and will continue to do so if a concession is granted. Specific policies implemented by the Applicant are: 1. The Applicants visitors are advised that if they are fortunate to observe wildlife to give it space, and to avoid leaving temptations such as food, shiny or brightly coloured objects, and loose clothing. 2. No recordings of bird song will be played by either the Applicants staff or its visitors while on track. 3. The Applicants staff and visitors are advised not to handle lizards and to avoid lifting rocks (it can disturb lizards and invertebrate habitats). 4. The Applicant operates under the Leave No Trace principles. 5. No dogs are permitted on the land or waters. No construction (track or facilities) is proposed as part of this application. Maintenance and repair of the track and the Applicants structures are undertaken with the highest regard to the environment. The Applicants Responsible Tourism Policy (Document R) also addresses some of these issues. The Applicants staff and other connected companies (parent or trading) are actively involved in conservation, biodiversity projects in the region. The Applicant actively encourages staff and visitors to engage in conservation projects where they can.
Terrestrial Values - Flora and Fauna	Increased knowledge and appreciation of the natural history of the area (positive).	Educate staff and visitors on the natural values of the land through interpretation. Interpretation of the natural values of the track and region enrich a visitor's experience. By telling stories and relating messages to visitors, the importance of protecting and conserving biodiversity is relayed to both staff and visitors by the Applicant. Both are educated on the local animals and plants that may be

		seen during the multiday guided walk activity, the significance of them and how best to care for their environment.
	Opportunities to participate in conservation initiatives with other organisations to preserve taonga species in the area (positive)	Kea Project – The Applicant is in the initial stages of working with the Kea Conservation Trust on Kea protection projects. Lead removal from structures and buildings has occurred and the Applicant is working with the Trust to survey the Kea population around the Milford Track area. The Applicant is willing to investigate opportunities to collaborate with other organisations on suitable and advisable conservation initiatives appropriate for the Milford Track and/or the Fiordland National Park. Previously, the Applicant has partnered with the Department of Conservation and the Fiordland Conservation Trust in Brown Teal/ Pāteke conservation projects. The Applicant would be interested in partnering in such projects again.
	Damage to the track and surrounding land	The total daily number of independent and guided overnight walkers entering the track is prescribed at 90 people within the Fiordland National Park Management Plan (FNPMP). This provision indicates that the track facility can accommodate this number of overnight walkers. The number of guided multiday overnight walkers' portion is 50 per day. The Applicant currently operates in accordance with this number and is not applying to change these limits under this application. The Applicant currently financially contributes to maintain the Milford Track network, and on track facilities through a concession condition. If the concession was approved, the Applicant is committed to this contribution condition to ensure any potential adverse effects of its overnight walkers on the condition of the track are remedied and mitigated. The Applicants staff and visitors are educated on appropriate "track" behaviour i.e. keeping to the formed track, being respectful to all walkers on the track, not exceeding any loading limitations on structures or facilities etc. The operation of a side by side vehicle between Glade Wharf and Glade House is done with utmost consideration for the surrounding environment, and other users of the track. The vehicle is always kept to the track to avoiding damage to the surrounding lands and waterways. It is only operated between Glade House and Glade Wharf for the efficient transportation of supplies. The

		Applicant does not permit by any other use of this vehicle outside of operational purposes. Additionally, the Applicant implements an internal policy on responsible tourism and includes (but not limited to) educating staff and visitors on waste management, toileting, protection of flora and fauna, water pollution and conservation etc. The Applicant considers that adherence to management planning documents and in place policies for sustainable, responsible tourism avoids any potential effects of the proposed activity on the track and surrounding environment. The Applicant also intends to implement the Care Codes (i.e. Leave no Trace, Water Care Code, Visit the Kiwi Way) in appropriate aspects of the operation to ensure staff and users of the multiday guided walk operation visit the Fiordland National Park and the Milford Track in the most sustainable and responsible way.
Recreation Values	Displacement of visitors; Congestion on track and at facilities; Conflict of use.	The Applicant is committed to ensuring any adverse effects of the activity on walkers is avoided. The Milford Track is walked in one direction only, and while this assists in avoiding perceived congestion on the track and at the facilities, the Applicant also uses other methods to avoid this potential impact. The Applicant always complies with the authorised number of guided overnight walkers on the track, with up to 50 visitors entering the track on any one day during the Great Walk season being the approved level of activity. While 50 visitors may enter the track together (by boat and disembark at Glade Wharf) the party breaks up into smaller groups while on the track. This is often through natural selection (time management of individuals, group dynamics, individual physical abilities etc), however the guides observe and manage this as well. Often group sizes on the track are as small as two or three pax, but usually no greater than 15 pax (in accordance with the visitor setting). There are times where it is necessary to keep larger groups together for health and safety reasons or the track has been compromised by a natural event. It is in these instances only that group sizes may at times be briefly be greater than 15pax. The guides also spread themselves through each booked group on track for operational purposes. This encourages the Applicants visitors to do the same.

		The Applicant owns and operates its own accommodation lodges and shelter facilities along the length of the track. This alleviates any congestion and crowding within the independent huts and shelters. Where the Applicant utilises the independent walker facilities (in case of an emergency or during a walk the use of ablution facilities) it does so sparingly. The Applicant cleans and restocks the shelter toilet facilities along the length of the track, and provides a hot drink making service at the Quintin Day shelter for the independent walkers on track. The Applicants staff are trained and instructed to be considerate of other users of the national park, and their reasons for visiting. The Applicants staff pass on this message to its walkers. They will respect other people's use of the track i.e. independent walkers, day walkers. Additionally, the Applicant develops, maintains and monitors relationships with other users of the National Park to avoid conflict of use. The operation of the barge from Te Anau Downs, across Lake Te Anau to Glade Wharf is timed to avoid conflict with water taxi services and mitigate any potential disturbance to walkers of the track. The barge operates only outside of times where water taxis have completed embarking and disembarking of their passengers. The Applicant liaises and coordinates the schedule with water taxi operators and as a rule the Applicant does not operate the barge service at Te Anau Downs or Glade Wharf within half an hour of the Milford Track walkers arriving/departing.
	Restriction in access and freedom of entry	The proposal to continue operating the guided multiday walk on the Milford Track, with the supporting activities will not impede independent access to the Fiordland National park or access to the track system and its facilities. The proposed lease activity is for existing structures, buildings and utilities that support the multiday guided walk and it is not intended to interfere with the public's right to access and enjoy the Milford Track and wider Fiordland National Park. The Quintin Lodge day shelter, available for use by independent walkers, is situated within the proposed lease area around the rest of the Quintin Lodge facilities and services. However, the Applicant will continue to accept as a condition of its concession to allow the day shelter and track leading to the Sutherland Falls to be available for access by independent

		visitors. For shelters and toilets on the track the lease land proposed only includes the footprint of the existing facility. While the proposed lease area around the accommodation lodges and auxiliary structures includes land in between the structures and buildings, this does not affect the public's right to enjoy and access the Milford Track because these leased areas are located away from the track and areas that independent walkers need to access or enjoy while walking the Milford Track. There can be circumstances where the Department of Conservation will request that the Applicant assists in closing a section(s) of the track if the conditions deem it necessary and this is the Department's decision to do so. This is the only instance where the Applicant would be involved in restricting freedom of entry, on the request of the Department. Otherwise, the Applicant takes every opportunity to ensure that access and entry does not seem restricted to independent walkers,
	Noise pollution	Aircraft activity can have an adverse effect on the tranquillity levels of the Milford Track and Fiordland National Park. The Applicant proposes to operate aircraft as part of the multiday guided walk operation and operates on its own Civil Aviation Air Operators Certificate. The activity is integral to the effective, safe and competent operation of the activity. Aircraft access within the Milford Track High Use Corridor (Fiordland National Park Management Plan visitor setting) is unlimited for landings and take offs. The FNPMP does describe the provisions for aircraft access for the Milford Track, Deepwater Basin (Parking Activity Area) and Te Anau Downs Front Country, all areas that the Applicant may use aircraft as part of the proposed activity under this application. The Applicant has provided an analysis of the FNPMP provisions as part of this application in attachment 3a:l to Form 3B. Aircraft noise abatement is always a consideration for the Applicants operations, and a Noise Abatement Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed. Flight path and height considerations are always part of the Applicants operational management decision making. The objective is to be 1500ft or higher when above the track, whenever possible, although ultimately

		overflying over the track is avoided. Low level operations are avoided wherever possible. Further information can be found in the attached SOP (Document Q). Flying is weather dependent, and this is another major consideration. Aircraft movements are often dictated by weather developments in this environment. Pilots for the Applicant will be required to also participate in the AIRCARE Accreditation Programme. This training includes a Code of Practice for noise abatement, among other flight safety and environmental management systems. The use of the barge to assist in resupply and transportation of materials for maintenance, repair and development means that those activities do not rely on aircraft which assists in the reduction of aircraft movements over and around the Milford Track, and rest of Fiordland National Park. The use of the side by side vehicle for the efficient transportation of supplies between Glade Wharf and Glade House is done so with consideration to the other users of the track. Timing is essential so not to adversely impact on the experience of all visitors. The transportation of supplies is timed so that the vehicle operating between scheduled boat arrivals/departures. Other potential noise pollution factors are generators used as part of the service at the accommodation lodges. The Applicant takes all appropriate measures to ensure noise levels are controlled from the generator sheds so not to impact on any users of the land surrounding these structures. The Applicant has upgraded the generator sheds to include further noise and sound proofing. Furthermore, the Applicants operation protocol includes switching between generator sizes and timing of their use to ensure impact is as minimal as possible, and to conserve fuel.
	Health and Safety	Health and safety of staff and visitors is a priority. Operating in an alpine environment means changeable weather conditions and a requirement to be prepared for any eventuality. All aspects of the proposed multiday guided walk operation deliver a safe experience for both staff and visitors. A Health and Safety Plan for the proposed activity, covering the policies, procedures and processes, is audited routinely to ensure that best practice and the highest level of outdoor safety is achieved. The Applicant has achieved OutdoorsMark accreditation. This is a nationally and internationally recognised certificate in

		health and safety for outdoor adventure activities. Additionally, the Applicant is a Gold Sustainable Tourism Business operator, as awarded from Qualmark. Among other things, this award means that the Applicant has achieved necessary Health, Safety and Wellness standards for this proposed activity at the highest level presented by Qualmark. The Applicant's health and safety plan, and confirmation of both the OutdoorsMark accreditation and Qualmark business award are attached (Documents P, S and T respectively). The Applicant considers conducting its operations in accordance with the health and safety plan suitably remedies any potential effects of the activity relating to health and safety.
	Empowering individuals, providing a sense of adventure and achievement (positive); Health and wellbeing benefits by recreating in nature (positive); Increased knowledge and appreciation of other recreational opportunities within the area.	The continuance of the guided multiday walk on the Milford Track by the Applicant provides a sound, proven and quality experience for individuals who may not be able or choose not to walk the track as an independent walker. The Applicants activities enable a greater range of individuals to recreate in the natural environment, in one of the most spectacular places in the world and with the safety and security of a guided product. While any activity in the alpine environment should be undertaken with appropriate due diligence, the continuation of the Applicants activities provides a level of confidence to potential visitors of the Fiordland National Park. The Applicant has a proven track record at providing high-quality service for guided walks in this environment and empowers its visitors to enjoy the outdoors where they may not have had the ability to do so as an independent walker. The Applicants activities offer an opportunity to be physically active in an environment that provides individuals a sense of adventure and achievement. This setting and experience may facilitate benefits for physical health and wellbeing. The Applicants staff also provide information to its visitors on complementary recreation activities within the vicinity or wider area.
Cultural Values – Ngāi Tahu mana whenua over Fiordland National Park.	Neglected, or inaccurate presentation; Importance of wāhi tapu	Background: The Milford Track and the Fiordland National Park have extensive significant cultural values to appreciate and understand. Māori used the land and waters for mahinga kai. Tribes would travel to the likes of Milford Sound/*Piopiotahi* in search of kai (fishing and hunting on the way) and

		pounamu. The travel would take them over the alpine passes, such as MacKinnon to reach the west from the east. Many areas within the National Park are of significance to Ngāi Tahu, such as Mt Tūtoko, having a Tōpuni (overlay of Ngāi Tahu values) over it, and other landmarks being recognised for their significance to Ngai Tahu i.e. Lake Manapōuri, Lake Te Anau, Lake Hauroko, and Waiau River, make up part of the Deed of Recognition. While landmarks and areas of the park are significant to tangata whenua, so is the flora and fauna. Taonga species are those that are treasured by Ngāi Tahu. Ngāi Tahu has greater participation in the protection and preservation of these species, and of the land and waters it has mana whenua over through the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. The Applicants proposal to continue the existing multiday guided walk will remain an opportunity to educate and inform staff and visitors of the significance of the area to iwi. It is the Applicant's desire to seek guidance from Ngāi Tahu to present a product that suitably addresses the cultural and spiritual values and sensitivities of iwi connected with the Milford Track and the surrounding Fiordland National Park. The Applicant incorporates cultural interpretation into its existing activity and wishes to further enhance this interpretation in consultation with Papatipu Rūnanga. Additionally, the Applicant would adhere to the Accidental Discovery Protocols if any find was made that invoked these, including natural state pounamu accidentally discovered.
Historic Values – Two actively managed historic sites along the track: Mackinnon Pass memorial (national importance); and Sandfly Point Brick Chimney (local importance).	Damage to historic sites; History brought to life and protected (positive)	The history and the historic values of the Milford Track is one of the most important aspects of the Applicants interpretation messages to its visitors. The Applicants philosophy is that education is key in preservation and employing interpretation as a tool to educate and enrich visitors overall experience. Staff, as part of their pre-season training, are educated on the history of the track, the significant people and events associated with it and the history of the wider area. This information is passed on to the Applicants visitors by the Applicants staff throughout the activity. Staff and visitors are expected to treat all areas with respect, especially those with historical, cultural or spiritual significance.

		The Applicant would adhere to the Accidental Discovery Protocols if any material is discovered during any aspect of the multiday walk guided activity. The Applicant is willing to discuss and investigate opportunities to collaborate with the Department of Conservation or another appropriate organisation on appropriate and advisable historic preservation work in relation to the actively managed historic sites within the Milford Track setting.
Aquatic Values	Discharge of pollutants;	As previously recorded in this EIA, the Applicant operates onsite septic systems at the lodges and at Boatshed shelter. All wastewater is discharged to these systems. The current systems have been through appropriate authorisation processes and the potential adverse effects of these considered. However, the Applicant ensures all aspects of the wastewater systems are 'fit for purpose' and are monitored and maintained in good working order to ensure no adverse impact is made on the environment and other users of the land. Sewage sludge is removed from the park as necessary. Monitoring of current systems occurs regularly to ensure maintenance is applied at appropriate times and to prevent any system failure. Waterway tests occur throughout the walking season as part of the monitoring programme. The Applicant uses sustainable cleaning and soap products to safeguard and complement the septic systems. Further information is provided in the attached Responsible Tourism Policy, a policy applied by the Applicant in all aspects of their operation. The Applicants staff and visitors are educated on appropriate and responsible toileting practices to safeguard waterways. The Leave no Trace principles apply.
Aquatic Values (cont.)	Disturbance to aquatic life and habitats	As previously mentioned in this EIA, the Applicant promotes environmental care through staff and visitor education. The Applicant operates vessels on the waters at a speed that limits disturbance and is appropriate for the waters it is being operated on.
	Introduction of new or increase of existing threats.	As previously mentioned in this EIA, it is in the Applicants best interest to safeguard the land and waters for the sustainability and quality of the proposed activity. The Applicant takes all precautions to ensure weeds and pests are not introduced to the land and waters through its operations and this is done by ensuring all vessels, tyres, footwear, gaiters, packs and any other items are

		checked and cleaned before entering the water or land. Vessels and other vehicles are checked to ensure no pests are brought into the waters or onto the land. Biosecurity management is followed when any biosecurity threat is notified.
Cumulative Effects	Visitors experience (both independent and guided)	The Applicant is not proposing to increase the capacity of the multiday guided walk operation on the Milford Track within the proposed term of this application. It considers that the effects of the existing operation are well known and can be suitably avoided, remedied or mitigated through the proposed methods within this EIA. The Applicant does not consider that the effects of continuing the current multiday guided walk will result in any significant cumulative impact on the physical, social or management environment of the Fiordland National Park.

Location on Public Conservation Lands

Fiordland National Park: Mount Pillans telecommunications site, visitor setting is Eastern Remote

Fiordland National Park: 5 Mile telecommunications site, visitor setting is Eastern Remote

Special feature or value	Potential effects of your activity on the feature or value (positive or adverse)	Methods to remedy, mitigate or avoid any adverse effects identified
Terrestrial Values	Introduction of weeds or pests to the land; Construction/alteration waste debris. Pollution of the land and waters	The Applicant takes the responsibility of ensuring the repeater is always maintained in proper working condition. Prior to accessing the site (land) the Applicant ensures that all equipment and materials brought onto the land is checked and cleaned and free from any weeds or pests. Furthermore, all equipment waste and debris are removed from the land at the conclusion of a site visit. The Applicant undertakes weed control at the site as required. No fuel is stored on the land.
Landscape Values	Intrusion on the landscape.	No power lines or cables are to be strung in the air to any of the repeater equipment, they will be fastened to the equipment or buried underground. Any alterations to the site or the repeater would need prior approval from the Department of Conservation (DOC).
Recreation Values	Conflict of use of the land; Communication capability for health and safety purposes (positive)	The Applicant is prepared to update or relocate the equipment and facility if it is required as a result of improvements in technology where it can provide the same or similar service, and the effects on the land would be reduced or further mitigated with this occurring. The Applicant undertakes only a minimal number of maintenance trips per annum to reduce the effects of aircraft on the surrounding land and its users. The existence of the telecommunication repeater utility enables communication between the on track, transport and base staff. This facility delivers a practical solution to addressing the health and safety priorities of all individuals involved in the multiday guided walk operation. It is also used for emergency operations as required, including Search and Rescue events.

Monitoring and reporting

The Applicant is committed to monitoring its activities on public conservation lands and waters. This action enables continual quality checks on the experience and assesses if the activity is having any detrimental effect on the environment.

Monitoring of impacts of the activity on the physical environment is accomplished by undertaking water testing, and observations and recordings of the trapping programmes around the lodge accommodation facilities. Monitoring occurs regularly throughout the Great Walk season and recorded with the Applicants management. Any monitoring and/or records that detect an unsatisfactory outcome is reported to the Department of Conservation. The Applicant would also submit a plan and/or method to remedy, avoid or mitigate if this was necessary and work with the Department of Conservation to reach a satisfactory outcome. Additionally, if it were appropriate the Applicant would review and amend protocols and procedures for any aspect of its operation. The Applicant is prepared to consult and collaborate with iwi, and/or the Department of Conservation where necessary. Incidental monitoring by staff and visitors can also occur and any noteworthy observations are recorded and forwarded to management.

Monitoring of impacts of the activity on the social environment is accomplished through visitor surveys, staff observations and incidental feedback from visitors. At the end of each trip every visitor is given an opportunity to evaluate their experience, and again after a two week period the visitors have another opportunity to fill out the survey (if they missed the opportunity the first time round or it gives individuals time to reflect and provide further feedback). While presently this data is focused on product experience, the Applicant would be amendable to collecting data that is meaningful to assessing visitor experience on the track environment and/or other elements requiring evaluation.

Any observations and incidental feedback that is relative to any of the potential effects of the activity will be recorded and shared with the Department of Conservation.